DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 446 454 FL 801 411

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TITLE Ouch! Or ESL and the Glass Ceiling.
PUB DATE 2000-03-16
NOTE 44p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (Vancouver, BC, Canada, March 14-18, 2000).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Audiovisual Instruction; English for Special Purposes; *English (Second Language); *Equal Opportunities (Jobs); Films; Interpersonal Communication; Professional Development; Second Language Instruction; Second Language Learning; Sociolinguistics; *Teacher Education
IDENTIFIERS Glass Ceiling

ABSTRACT

The realities of the glass ceiling, which prevents qualified women, minorities, and many English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) students from advancement and promotion, are rarely discussed in English for Special Purposes (ESP)/ESL programs and courses. This paper explores the barriers to success, focusing on the sociolinguistic factors of verbal and non-verbal social and interpersonal skills. By using popular videos to dramatically illustrate these barriers, students and clients of ESP/ESL programs can understand how the glass ceiling affects them. The paper includes definitions of the various aspects of the glass ceiling and its attendant barriers, as well as the data gathered from interviews on the needs of professors in MBA and other professional programs, and the implications for program design and lesson planning on the part of ESP/ESL professionals. Details are included on how to use video and incorporate appropriate communicative skills in the classroom for the student or client to gain the necessary skills for success. The short video clips mentioned in the paper from the movies "Gung-Ho," "Nine-to-Five," "Baby Boom," "Working Girl," and "the Associate" are easily rented or purchased. Fifty-seven references and resources are included. (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education) (Author/KFT)

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ED 446 454

Ouch! Or ESL and the Glass Ceiling

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Paper for Presentation
TESOL 34th Annual Convention
Vancouver, Canada
March 16, 2000

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Abstract

The realities of the glass ceiling, which prevents qualified women, minorities, and many ESL students from advancement and promotion, are rarely discussed in ESP/ESL programs and courses. This paper explores the barriers to success, focusing on the sociolinguistic factors of verbal and non-verbal social and interpersonal skills. By using popular videos to dramatically illustrate these barriers, students and clients of ESP/ESL programs can understand how the glass ceiling affects them. The paper includes definitions of the various aspects of the glass ceiling and its attendant barriers, as well as the data gathered from interviews on the needs of professors in MBA and other professional programs, and the implications for program design and lesson planning on the part of ESP/ESL professionals. Details are included on how to use video and incorporate appropriate communicative skills in the classroom for the student or client to gain the necessary skills for success. The short video clips mentioned in this paper (*Gung-Ho*, *Nine-to-Five*, *Baby Boom*, *Working Girl*, and *The Associate*) are easily rented or purchased.

Introduction

Chen is a highly motivated student in an advanced English for Business Purposes class. He hopes to achieve high scores on the GMAT exam and enter a top-rated MBA program in the United States. Already Chen has filled out several applications and is working on improving his reading and writing skills. He finds the grammar and analytical reasoning practice sections of the GMAT challenging but not impossible. As his instructor, I am confident that he will do quite well on both the TOEFL and the GMAT required exams. Most likely, he will be accepted at one of the schools to which he applies.

But since the students in business schools do not walk around with their exam scores posted on their foreheads, I worry that his future classmates and professors will wonder how he ever got accepted into an MBA program. My prediction that this will happen is based on what I expect will happen when Chen begins to speak. In all probability, Chen will have to speak out in class and in his work group. He will have to give presentations, agree with classmates, disagree, and ask for clarification. He will have to hold the floor while thinking about what he wants to say. And he will have to be understood. Like Chen, many L2 learners in business ESL classes have difficulty speaking out and being understood: they hit a glass ceiling.

In this paper, I briefly introduce the reader to the glass ceiling and its counterparts with regard to business ESL students such as Chen. In the text, I include results of interviews conducted with professors in MBA programs. Next, a speaking guide is proposed based on a modified ACTFL (American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages) guide which assists the instructor in asking appropriate questions. The reader is then introduced to speech gambits for stalling, holding the floor, piggybacking, interrupting, agreeing, disagreeing, asking for

clarification, etc. These are used in conjunction with video clips taken from various popular movies illustrating the speech gambits in use in business situations. In the section of the paper on the use of video, tips and lesson ideas are also presented. In conclusion, the use of video seems to be a successful method for raising awareness of various interactional styles. Students' own practice, while videotaping themselves, ensures that they are able to use speech gambits for successful communication.

The Glass Ceiling and Its Counterparts

The "glass ceiling," a term that refers to unseen barriers that block advancement to corporate management levels, is usually reserved for women who have not been able to advance to upper levels of the business world. More recently, the term "glass ceiling" has been in evident use for other minority groups. These barriers that prevent advancement are divided into three parts: the organization, the interpersonal, and the personal. This brief overview examines all three areas by looking at the structure of business and the communication factors, both verbal and non-verbal, necessary for getting ahead. In the final analysis, communication skills are barriers to advancement and therefore a part of the glass ceiling.

"Bumping up against the glass ceiling" is a common phrase that refers to a phenomenon which has been reserved for women until very recently, whereby these women are unable to advance up the corporate ladder due to some unseen barriers. What is meant by the concept "glass ceiling" now also includes other minorities such as African Americans, Hispanics, Asians, and it is compounded for minority women. Incidentally, the glass ceiling exists for Native Americans, the disabled, the elderly, and other socially oppressed groups, although there is scant

research for these groups (Jackson, et al, 1992). Although some critics like Nancy Fulco of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and Phyllis Schlafly, president of The Eagle Forum, quoted by Adams (1993) would like to deny the existence of the glass ceiling, ("Removing artificial barriers," 1994, p. 19) it has been officially recognized by the Department of Labor.

Others who believe that the glass ceiling is nothing more than a pipeline problem are usually male executives in their 50s or 60s who say it takes years to get to the top. They claim that women and other minorities, even with college degrees, have only recently entered the work force and it is only a matter of time before they will reach the top ranks of management (Adams, 1993). They need experience first. Schlafly and others like her, notably Nancy J. Perry in *Fortune*, recounted in Adams, (1993) argue that even if a glass ceiling does exist, women should take responsibility for getting ahead themselves, or decide whether or not corporate advancement is something they really want over the traditional mommy track (Adams, 1993; Mainiero, 1994), the path that leads to and ends in motherhood, which these critics feel is one of the personal barriers to advancement.

Apparently, the glass ceiling is not the only problem. There are glass walls which segregate employees in "certain types of jobs that do not provide a clear path to the top" ("Removing artificial barriers," 1994, p. 19). Some say the sticky floor, whereby the employee cannot get beyond the entry level, actually poses more of a problem for minorities fortunate enough to get in the front door (Adams, 1993; "Removing artificial barriers," 1994).

The literature on barriers to advancement for women is extensive. A glance at the body of literature under the heading "glass ceiling" reveals over 400 articles with related fields which include among others "discrimination," "hiring practices," and "promotions." It appears that less

material exists for African Americans, even less for Hispanics, and even less for Asians.

The focus of this review is on Asians, particularly those who have been born in Asia and have immigrated to the U.S., and much of the material on the glass ceiling has been extracted, extrapolated and employed from how it affects women and other minorities to how it affects Asians specifically, since little material exists which addresses Asians. To understand the glass ceiling and how it works for Asians, it is important to first make a cursory examination of the structure of businesses that do not have a diverse work force and to look at why so little attention is given to Asians. The main objective of this overview is to peruse the literature regarding social and interpersonal skills as barriers to advancement. Within this area we will examine language, both verbal and non-verbal factors, that influence management in promoting women and other minorities. Finally, there is a body of literature that provides recommendations for businesses and for the individual in shattering the glass ceiling of which we will make a brief inspection.

The structure of the corporate world has its own culture and set of appropriate behaviors (Adams, 1993; Dell, 1992; Thornburg, 1994). Nevertheless, the culture and behaviors can apparently be learned according to the numerous self-help books available (Glaser & Smalley, 1992; Harragan, 1977; Martel, 1984; Morris, 1972; Munter, 1982; Parkinson & Rowe, 1977; Preston, 1979). The learned culture, however, is communication based, an issue we will examine in the next section. This section surveys the structure of business and specifically how Asians fit into this structure.

The Structure of Business

The problem of the glass ceiling for Caucasian women is different than it is for minorities (Adams, 1993), although "outright bigotry, while still present, is often seen as secondary" (p.

951). Women and minorities wind up in dead end jobs because of racism and sexism, but also because of other factors. One mentioned earlier was the pipeline argument (Adams, 1993), which conveys the idea that women, who have not been in the work force long enough, lack the experience to advance. Another reason why women do not advance is due to the lack of mentors and role models (Adams, 1993; Dell, 1992; Mainiero, 1994; Thornburg, 1994). Proponents of the mentoring system claim that businesses are made in the image of the corporate culture which just perpetuates itself. Those who have made it to the top are reluctant to reach out to others like themselves for fear of "being labeled a conspirator against the establishment, and a feeling that prized positions are so hard won that others should pay the same price" (Thornburg, 1994, p. 84). In addition, many Caucasian males have never played the role of mentor to members of minority groups (Thornburg, 1994) and being mentored is counted as one of the surest ways to advancement (Mainiero, 1994; Morrison, et al, 1987). Therefore, the corporation, which is made up of mostly Caucasian males, is not a place where women and other minorities are encouraged and trained to move up the corporate ladder.

The two factors—the pipeline and the mentoring system—serve to illustrate that the structure of business has some influence on the lack of minorities at the top ranks of management. Other factors are a proven track record of achievements; a desire to succeed; the ability to manage subordinates; a willingness to take career risks; and the ability to be tough, decisive, and demanding (Dell, 1992; Morrison, et al, 1987). In addition, experience, grades, knowledge, and leadership are some of the qualities recruiters look for. (Baye, 1994/1995). Experience just might have something to do with the pipeline effect and only time can provide this. Grades and knowledge have to do with education and who is touted as the model minority more than the

educated Asians? Students from China, Japan, Taiwan, Vietnam, and the Philippines, to name a few Asian countries, often make high achievements in education.

If the statistics look hopeless for minority groups in the ranks of business, they look hopeless for Asian minorities as well even though most research underscores their success (Woo, 1994). Asians have been called America's model minority because of their high academic achievement, their hard work and their thriftiness; (Woo, 1994) but it would appear to be a myth. Since minority groups are often compared to each other, Asians appear to be doing very well, however, they do not always get the recognition they deserve in the way of salaries and promotions. Often it is the case that other minority groups are queried as to why they are not doing as well as Asians because this group appears to be well educated, have successful careers, and to earn relatively high salaries. Compared to other minorities perhaps the Asians appear to be doing well; but, they are not getting what they really deserve.

One reason why Asians are not compensated commensurate with their hard work is that they are reluctant to complain and are unwilling to talk about abuses on the job (Woo, 1994). The Chinese community, for example, is very close-knit (Cyr & Frost, 1991; Woo, 1994) and culturally, it is difficult to change a community's ways of dealing with the work place in the U.S. (Cyr & Frost, 1991; Moran & Harris, 1982). "In some Eastern societies, change itself is resisted and viewed as threatening. In general, national cultures that value harmony, cohesion, and standardization tend to avoid conflict and reduce tension when possible" (Cyr & Frost, 1992, p. 206).

Another reason Asians appear to be earning more than other minority groups is due to their general geographical location. They tend to live in areas where the cost of living is very

high—California, Hawaii, Illinois, New York, and Washington. Therefore, when compared with other minorities it looks like Asians are doing quite well as they are paid more for living in these high cost areas. However, as consumers, they also pay more and this is not factored in to the statistics (Woo, 1994).

In analyses of Asians, one factor is overlooked and that is where the Asian population has been educated. Although it may appear that many Asian professionals have earned a doctorate degree, over two-thirds of them in the United States have been trained and educated abroad (Woo, 1994). Moreover, many of them are unable to practice at their professional level of education as they bump up against the glass ceiling of restrictive licensing. The fact that many of them become owners and managers of their own businesses points to an inability to find jobs their fields. They congregate in the wholesale and retail manufacturing businesses and employ their own people, even their own family members who may earn less than an outsider (Wong, 1984; Woo, 1994).

Woo (1994) cites statistical evidence regarding Filipino American women who "have the highest college completion rate of all women and graduate at a rate 50 percent greater than that of majority males" (p. 679) with Chinese American and Japanese American women following close behind. Yet, these women receive less compensation than Caucasians and not just in salary alone. They seem to be relegated to the ranks of office worker. Other factors may play a role in addition to the ones mentioned above, such as blatant discrimination, self-imposed limitations of modesty or self-effacing remarks, (Glaser & Smalley, 1992) social and interpersonal skills, and the institutional factors we noted previously. The social and interpersonal skills regarding language affect all minority advancement and is the subject of the next section.

Social and Interpersonal Skills

A popular movie from the 1980s and now on videotape, parodied the working world of American women in big business. *Nine to Five* (Gilbert, 1990) depicts the lives of three secretaries as they try to turn the tables on their "sexist, egotistical, lying, hypocritical, bigot boss." Not only does one of the women have seniority over the boss, now a vice-president, but she trained him for the position as well. The boss, Mr. Hart, refers to the women as "girls" and remarks at how unfortunate it is that, as girls, they never got a chance to play football or baseball so they do not understand the concept of teamwork. He goes on to say that, nevertheless, they must work as a team in order to "cut the balls off the competition," which, of course, could only be male. As a token of appreciation, Hart gives one of the secretaries a gift, sexually harasses her in his office, and claims she is more than just a "dumb secretary" to him. To another he refuses a promotion explaining that clients would rather deal with a man when it comes to figures. In addition, he is against the policy of hiring Hispanics, African Americans, and the disabled for office positions, preferring instead to hire a drunk. Meanwhile, his wife is on an Italian cruise ship which he refused to go on because he was not going to go on any "dago ship."

Although intended as a comedy, the movie has many aspects that ring true: discrimination, sexual harassment, and a corporate lingo. The office has its own culture and by extension, its own language. "The working world vocabulary falls into three general subject categories: military derivations; sports lingo; sexual allusions" (Harragan, 1977, p. 70) all of which are found in the mouth of Hart in *Nine to Five*. Even in business classes, textbooks use football lingo to assist students in understanding the concepts (Harragan, 1977) regardless of whether the students are male or female. Hart was right about the fact that many women, and

even many minorities, have no chance to play football even if they are familiar with this sport or any others. Asians, too, have had very little chance to play this sport. On the other hand, the concept of teamwork differs cross-culturally. For example, baseball, which is popular in Japan, looks very different from the American version which gives hero status to individual players. In Japan, baseball is truly a team effort.

Glaser and Smalley (1992) maintain that "no matter how good you look on paper, or how productive and dedicated you are, your communication skills will almost always be the deciding factor" (p. 3) for whatever happens to the employee. Taking a look again at America's model minority, the Asian population, it would seem that we could paraphrase the above quote to say "no matter how good your grades, or how hard you work, communication skills are essential and will decide your future."

Are communication skills really all that important? After all, the MBA program to which our student Chen is applying only asks for a TOEFL and GMAT score at this time. Although both tests include essays, a spoken test is not a prerequisite, yet. But in reality, at work and in the classroom, "communication style or behavior within the business setting is critical to both men and women because it is at the core of everything that happens at work" (Dell, 1992, p. 230). According to Glaser and Smalley (1992), a survey of five hundred executives revealed that "communication skills ranked second only to job knowledge as factors crucial for business success" (p. 3). Those communication factors included the following: verbal and non-verbal skills, speech patterns, mannerisms, tone and quality of voice, gestures, way of dressing, way of writing, posture, eye contact, facial expressions, listening skills, questions asked and a sense of humor. In another study, Snyder (1993) identifies three categories, reduced from a list of thirty

factors devised by Ragins and Sundstrom. These factors affect gender segregation and utilization patterns at the individual, interpersonal, and organizational levels. Individual factors include some of the issues we have previously discussed such as choosing family over career. At the organizational level, the pipeline effect was one of the factors discussed in the first section of this review. Finally, an article by Raudsepp (1994/1995) identifies Interpersonal Skills and Communications Skills among the top "eight categories considered by most companies to be the most important" (p. 53) for a successful career. In the next section, our concern is with some of the interpersonal factors as they are communicated verbally and non-verbally.

Gender Differences in Communicating

Looking at verbal factors first, Glaser and Smalley (1992) remark that women lack power language. They apologize for everything, use hedging or qualifiers such as *kinda* or *sorta*, (Dell, 1992; Glaser & Smalley, 1992) and make excessive chit chat. In addition, they use empty adjectives and adverbs. Whereas men use *absolutely*, or *outstanding*, women use *awfully* or *terribly*. The less powerful language of women includes the use of tag questions, which make them sound unsure of themselves to men (Dell, 1992; Glaser & Smalley, 1992) even when the women themselves reveal that tag questions serve to reflect affiliation (Gardner, et al, 1994). But how one is perceived by others matters. Women tend to use disclaimers, like "I'm probably wrong, but..." which make them seem less assertive (Gardner, et al, 1994). Women tend to make lengthy requests, have superpolite speech, and hypercorrect grammar (Dell, 1992; Glaser & Smalley, 1992; Lakoff, 1975) and "use charm, appearance, ingratiation, and compliments" (Gardner, et al, 1994). They make self-effacing remarks and use fillers in their communication. Moreover, they ask too many questions in a powerless voice where the tone and volume are

whispery, monotonous, and slow, thereby reducing its effectiveness (Glaser & Smalley, 1992). In the popular comedy, *The Associate*, Laurel Ayers frequently uses such minimizing language, except when she is quitting her corporate job. At one point, while at a meeting with a group of men, she begins to cry, although it is to manipulate the men into reading her report.

In contrast, the movie *Baby Boom* opens with the "Tiger Lady" (J.C. Wyatt) using such power language that others find it offensive. She is offered a position as a partner because, as her boss explains, she is not thought of as a woman. Certainly, many women and minorities have had to choose opposing identities to be successful in their careers. In fact, more recently women in the U.S., like J.C. Wyatt of *Baby Boom*, are opting for the life of the entrepreneur with home-based businesses. J.C. explains that a woman can have a career and be a mother–she isn't limited to one identity, especially one created for the male corporate world.

Although these communication factors are applied to women, they are useful for explaining some of the communication patterns of many Asians, especially those that are not born in the U.S. Even though all of these factors are relevant, not all of them will be examined; we will only look at communication style (rhetorical sensitivity and expressive communication) and politeness strategies before moving on to non-verbal communication.

The most obvious example of Asian communicative style has already been given. In discussing America's model minority, Woo (1994) mentions the possibility of cultural style, specifically the uncomplaining and self-effacing ways of dealing with the world. American business style, on the other hand, tends to value directness and speech that promotes oneself. In a communication-based theory of the glass ceiling, Dell (1992) distinguishes between rhetorical sensitivity and expressive communication which have little to do with race or gender, but

everything to do with style. The argument is that the "rhetorically sensitive person weighs the needs and abilities of her listener and then limits, adjusts, or expands her communication to just what the listener can make use of or best handle" (p. 230). So, this style of communicating puts the other person's needs first thereby minimizing the needs, wants, and even achievements of the speaker. What results is a person who does not express ideas, accomplishments, and desires and looks incompetent.

On the other hand, the expressive communicator uses the dominant communication style of business and the technical world. This person "vents his own feelings, get these feelings into words, and then get those words off his chest" (p. 231) projecting an image of himself outward, regardless of how the listener feels about it. Since the upper levels of management are mostly men, and since men generally use expressive communication, they are insiders. An outsider is one who differs—one who does not identify with the rest of the group through communication style. Using expressive communication allows one to participate in the dominant style of the workplace and to project an image of oneself as a team player (Dell, 1992).

Previously, we looked at mentoring as one of the ways to shatter the glass ceiling. Dell (1992) suggests that the rhetorically sensitive person fails in communicating to the mentor because he or she uses a style of communication that prevents one from communicating his needs and from asking for help. This person is also unable to show what he or she has accomplished. In some cultures, being rhetorically sensitive is a virtue. A resume I once sent to a prospective employer in Japan was seen as very aggressive, a colleague in Japan later told me. My colleague explained that I had put down all the things I had done and this was not the Japanese way. I was told I should rewrite the resume and downplay my accomplishments. Self-promotion is a value of

American culture (Gardner, et al, 1994) not Japanese.

Asian Communication Style

In a contrastive study of politeness between American English and Chinese speakers, Chen (1993) attempts to reveal differences of social values between the two cultures, particularly in the beliefs about what constitutes self-image. It was found that the American speakers used ten politeness strategies and the Chinese, on the other hand, use a total of five strategies. It is interesting to compare the responses the Americans gave to a compliment with the response patterns of the Chinese.

The Americans tended to use the following strategies in response to a compliment which show a propensity for agreeing with the complimenter and avoiding self-praise. The first strategy used was thanking the complimenter, while agreeing with the complimenter followed. In the third strategy the Americans expressed gladness that the complimenter like the object. The next strategy was joking with the complimenter, followed by thanking the complimenter and returning the compliment as the fifth strategy. Upon receiving a compliment, some offered the object (or help) as a sixth strategy. Encouraging words, and explaining the reason why the object should be complimented followed as strategies seven and eight. Doubting the praiseworthiness of the object of the compliment was next. The tenth and final strategy was rejecting the compliment and denigrating the object of the compliment. This last strategy occurred only 12.7% of the time.

On the other hand, the Chinese used the following five strategies which show that the person on the receiving end of a compliment should be respectful and modest. Note that the first strategy, disagreeing and denigrating the compliment, similar to number ten above, was used by the Chinese 50.7% of the time. The second strategy was expressing embarrassment while the

third was explaining why the object should be complimented much like the American strategy which was eighth on the list. Thanking and denigrating the compliment was the fourth strategy used and finally, the fifth strategy involved only saying thank you.

In a business setting, the perception of a person's self image can mean advancement or not. In the case of the Chinese, from the Caucasian American cultural point of view, it appears that the Chinese person who disagrees and denigrates a compliment is modest, perhaps does not even like himself. The American may think this person has a poor self image. The Chinese would probably never make a joke as a response to a compliment and his seriousness would be seen in a negative light. It is the norm of Chinese society to be modest; however, the Chinese complimenter does not expect agreement, unlike his American counterpart who expects one of the other politeness strategies common to his culture. In addition, the Chinese person, who is perceived as having a poor self image, in fact, probably thinks positively about himself. However, all the Chinese need to do is "to *appear* humble, not necessarily to *think* humbly of themselves" (p. 67) according to their cultural mores. Many other Asian cultures value the appearance of being humble as it enhances their image, such as the Urdu (Delhi Muslims), Japanese, Polynesian, and Malaysian cultures (Chen, 1993). For the non-native born Asian American, the preferred cultural styles of dealing with the world can be an adjustment. We can conclude that if business remains the way it is—slow to diversify its work force, with Caucasian males at the top ranks—those unable to adapt their communicative styles to fit the dominant one will continue to bump up against the glass ceiling (Morrison, et al, 1987).

Non-verbal Communication

In this section we will look at two areas of non-verbal communication: body language and

dress. Body language of women has been criticized by numerous authors (Glaser & Smalley, 1992; Harragan, 1977; Martel, 1984; Morris, 1972; Munter, 1982; Parkinson & Rowe, 1977; Preston, 1979) who all seem to have the idea, that like verbal communication, non-verbal communication can be changed to suit the masculine, and thereby, dominant style.

One of the most criticized behaviors is smiling. Women are said to smile too much and at inappropriate times (Glaser & Smalley, 1992). If women smile at inappropriate times, then some Asian populations certainly do too, as the meaning of a smile differs cross-culturally. The smile of the Japanese or Chinese business person does not have the same meaning in American culture. Smiling can mean embarrassment, or "I hear what you are saying." As many an American business person has discovered, the Asian smile does not mean agreement (Collins, 1992). In fact, the Japanese smile and say *Hai*, which translates "yes" because they do not say "no" directly. This is a way of saying "I hear you" not "I agree with you" (Zimmerman, 1985).

Other criticisms of the woman's way of managing non-verbal communication is an inappropriate tilting or nodding of the head, a submissive body posture, distracting hand gestures, avoiding eye contact, and allowing for the invasion of personal space (Glaser & Smalley, 1992). In fact, in a study on first impressions of males and females reported on by Gardner, Van Eck Peluchette, and Clinebell (1994), appropriate non-verbal behavior included facial expressiveness and emotional spontaneity for females, and social or behavioral control for males, indicating that females who exhibit the non-verbal behaviors mentioned above do not make a good impression.

A popular movie, now video, depicting the differences between Japanese and American culture, *Gung Ho*, (Howard, 1986) serves as an example of so-called woman's non-verbal communication which the Japanese exhibit. The film deals with Japanese auto workers who assist

a failing U.S. firm. A close inspection of the communication style between the American liaison and the Japanese board members reveals vastly different ways of communicating information. In the board meeting, only one sentence is uttered by only one Japanese man. The American does all the talking and all the gesticulating. The Japanese are bent over the table in what might be interpreted as a submissive posture (not leaning back in their chairs), heads tilted, no smiles, hands in their laps. Although *Gung Ho* is only a Hollywood movie, other genres contrasts American and Japanese culture in much the same way (Barry, 1992; Collins 1987; Collins 1988; Collins, 1992; Maloney, 1975) and corroborate this "submissive" style of communicating.

Dress is a delicate issue as clothing usually expresses a personal style. Is there an appropriate style of dress and can employees still express themselves through their clothing?

> In business you are not dressing to express personal taste; you are dressing in a costume which should be designed to have an impact on your bosses and teammates. If your clothes don't convey the message that you are competent, able, ambitious, self-confident, reliable, and authoritative, nothing you say or do will overcome the negative signals emanating from your apparel (Harragan, 1977, p. 277).

In fact, employees who seem to care about their appearance, and the appearance of their working environment, are perceived by others as having a more caring attitude about their work as well (Parkinson & Rowe, 1977). (Note that many companies overeas have not adapted casual Fridays the way many U.S. companies have.)

A rule of the business world is to dress for the position you aspire to, not the one you already have. Harragan (1977) even goes so far as to assert that "an appropriately expensive wardrobe is likely to be a better investment in your future than a college course in some technical

subject" (p. 281). While this statement may seem shocking to some, fitting in to the corporate culture is going to go a long way for a person from a minority group who desires to be among the top levels of management. Knowledge is important, but the one who *appears* competent gets the opportunity to do the job. Management must be confident in the person promoted to do the job, and the employee dressed to inspire confidence gets the job (Morrison, et al, 1987). However, it would appear that only those with confidence in themselves actually dress the part. "Clothing and accessories tell us a lot about people. Dress well, and you signal success, power, positive habits, and high status. Studies have also linked clothing consciousness to higher self-esteem and job satisfaction" (Harragan, 1977, p. 104). In the movie, *Working Girl*, Tess is finally promoted to working with a woman boss, Katherine. In her explanations on office decorum, Katherine explains that they wear a uniform. Quoting from Coco Chanel, she iterates, "Dress shabbily, they notice the dress. Dress impeccably and they notice the woman." Examining herself, Tess takes these words to heart by removing both jewelry and make-up. Later, she even removes her big hair, claiming that if a woman is to be taken seriously in business, she needs serious hair.

The two areas of non-verbal communication addressed above—body language and dress—are noticeably different between American and Japanese culture. In Japan attitudes towards business are influenced by the older generation who are in the upper levels of management. Women are rarely found in the corporate board rooms of Japan, whereas it is more likely that a woman would be found in the upper levels of management in the U.S. Imagine the immigrant or sojourner from Japan who works for a woman in his department. The cultural adjustment to the corporation is one thing, working for a woman is another. He comes from an environment which is traditionally racist and sexist (Zimmerman, 1985).

The literature explains that if we could give a profile of the traditional Japanese businessman, he would be an employee who sacrifices himself for his company by going on company outings, always wearing the company pin, and being forever loyal to the group (no individualism here). In addition, he feels superior to other Asians of whom he has a low opinion. He has a horror of committing faux pas and thus, seems unsure of himself to the Americans with whom he desires to do business. As a newcomer in a social context, it is imperative for him to discover his social standing so he can fit in properly by using the correct hierarchical language. In order to do this, he presents his *meishi*, or business card, which denotes the company, department, and position he occupies. There are fixed rules in Japanese society and variation is not tolerated. A traditional Japanese saying goes, "The nail that sticks up, gets hammered down." Bowing is customary in Japan, yet the immigrant learns to give the handshake he learned in Japan, which does not require a firm grip. He is devoted to detail; hence, the obsession with perfect grammar. His wife does not participate in his business life (Zimmerman, 1985).

Regarding communication, the Japanese have been socialized from infancy not to make eye contact (Zimmerman, 1985). Americans use a face-to-face style of communication with their infants, preferring to keep them in front of them, whereas the Japanese mother carries her child on her back. Facial expression develops differently in these situations, one culture relying more heavily on it than the other. The gregarious facial expression praised in American culture is absent in Japanese culture (Gardner, et al,1994).

Subordinates in a Japanese business setting wait patiently and silently with a considerable period of silence between spoken communication. The silence is *part* of the communication. It keeps one from becoming excitable. In addition, the subordinate always agrees with the

supervisor (Jackson, et al, 1993) and explains any counter argument, which he may have, as the advocate's point of view, just in case the supervisor wants to know it (Zimmerman, 1985). Beating around the bush has been described as a woman's style of communicating, (Dell, 1992) but it is also the Japanese style of indirectness (Zimmerman, 1985). To show emotion either by expressing it in the face, or through vocal excitement, in the Japanese way of thinking, is to show weakness.

In Japan the correct business costume is a dark business suit, white shirt, and tie, and of course, the company pin. This uniform is worn summer or winter. The suit coat is left on as a sign of "getting down to business," unlike the American counterpart who would take off the jacket and roll up his sleeves (Zimmerman, 1985). In the movie *Gung Ho*, the American businessman wear a light colored suit and takes off his jacket to reveal short sleeves!

The Case of Mazda, Flat Rock, MI

Many of the differences between American and Japanese styles of communicating and doing business were evident at Mazda in Flat Rock, Michigan (Jackson, et al, 1993). It was clear that the Japanese management of this company had a different way of viewing people. "The Japanese visualized that if you just transfer the technical aspects, the human element is going to be the same" (p. 29). In this case study, the animosity between the two sides was paralyzing the business. In the process of negotiating a change in this company, several outcomes were noted. The Old Boys' Club, in this case the Japanese management, stopped having Japanese-only meetings which had communicated mixed messages to the Americans who commented that "for the first time it gave us some insight into what blacks and women must feel when they see an all-white male group go off to a meeting" (p. 30). In addition, they realized that they were working

on a different culture which was neither Japanese, nor American, but Mazda. The desire on both sides to make a change was evident, with a mature management an essential ingredient for change.

The conclusion to the case indicates that the differences in communication style, both verbally and non-verbally, by the Chinese, Japanese, and other Asian groups, are vastly different from the style of the American corporate world. Until U.S. companies learn to deal with diverse ways of communicating, it will be up to the employee who hits the glass ceiling, to adapt his or her communication style. As we noted previously, the structure of business is such that it makes itself in its own image. This will be a positive aspect of business when that image reflects the diverse population of the U.S. Except for outright discrimination, the minority who wishes to advance can do so more easily today than just a few years ago, but he or she will probably have to do so by adapting his or her cultural style and without help from the company. As it is, the Old Boys' Club "allows a limited number of members from oppressed groups such as women and racial minorities, provided that they have the 'right' perspective and credentials" (Jackson, et al, 1993, p. 67) as defined by the Old Boys' Club. So, for those who want to advance, given the structure of business as it now stands, they must operate on a deficit model, where something is wrong with them, and change their behavior until such time as business itself changes. The next section takes a very brief look at the recommendations in the literature for advancing up the corporate ladder.

Recommendations

Some companies are actively seeking to diversify their management ranks by including more women and other minorities (Baye, 1994/1995; Capowski, 1994; Gardner, et al, 1994;

Jackson, et al, 1993; Moskal, 1994; Randall, 1994/1995; Thornburg, 1994). Thornburg (1994) outlines the evolution of a company that develops a more diverse population. The first stage is using affirmative action to bring in more women and other minorities, although this stage alone does not work effectively to change company culture. "It doesn't grapple with the tough issues of behavior and valuing differences" (p. 79). The second stage involves dealing with issues associated with race and gender. Societal stereotypes about females and minority group members are extremely tenacious because they are so "deeply rooted in values and lifelong experience" (Snyder, 1993, p. 102). The third stage is the cultural evolution of the company. Instead of the people having to change, the company analyzes the institutional factors which affect differences such as "long timers vs. short timers, women vs. men, racial and cultural differences, even personality types" (Thornburg, 1994, p. 80). Since very few companies have evolved to this third stage, the individual who wishes to shatter the glass ceiling must first put pressure on it.

Another study (Jackson, et al, 1993) examines the stages a company goes through until it becomes a multi-cultural organization. Level One has two stages. The first stage is an Exclusionary Organization where one group maintains dominance over all the others and explicitly excludes them. The second stage is The Club, whereby others are not excluded, but only those who belong to The Club have privilege. In Level Two, Stage Three is the Compliance Organization which gives some access to women and other minorities into the Club if they are qualified and a team player. Stage Four is the Affirmative Action Organization which actively seeks to promote minorities; however, the practices of this organization are still derived from the dominant group's world view. In the final level, Level Three, Stage Five is defined as the Redefining Organization. This is a system in transition which is not satisfied with being anti-

sexist, or anti-racist, but is bent on assisting all its members in participating in the company's growth and success. The final stage, six, is a multi-cultural organization that reflects the contributions and interests of diverse cultural and social groups in its mission, operations, and product or service; it acts on a commitment to eradicate social oppression in all forms within the organization; the multi-cultural organization includes the members of diverse cultural and social groups as full participants, especially in decisions that shape the organization; and it follows through on broader external social responsibilities, including support of efforts to eliminate all forms of social oppression and to educate others in multi-cultural perspectives.

The Mazda case study, noted previously, put the multi-cultural organization to the test. Commenting on the process the authors note:

> Maintaining diversity is difficult...Most successes come through the day-to-day work; not through concentrating on relationships...In the Japanese culture, the time after work is the time to focus on relationships. Given our culture, this isn't always possible...both sides know they have much to learn from each other (p. 32).

Since this kind of multi-cultural environment does not yet exist in most companies, it will be up to individuals to forge their own way. From interviews with 55 high profile executive women, Mainiero (1994) depicts four stages of the development of executive women, all of them with the sole responsibility for advancement on the woman herself. The first stage entitled Political Naivete means being direct and developing an awareness of corporate culture. Building Credibility is the term given the second stage which involves performing against the accepted stereotype, working within the system, taking business risks, and building alliances and interpersonal networks. The third stage is called Refining a Style by which is meant delegating

and team-building, overcoming obstacles through sheer persistence, being tough as well as direct, and utilizing personal influence skills. The fourth and final stage is Shouldering Responsibilities which means being the sole woman (or minority group member) at the top, mentoring others, and managing to keep life in balance. The results of this study indicate that self-sacrifice for the company and its culture allowed these women to advance. Self-sacrifice is one of the characteristics we noted in the previous section regarding the Japanese. Coupled with determination, will a Japanese immigrant advance to the top levels of management? Other qualities such as education and hard work may be evident in this eager employee; however, is it enough? What does it take? No matter what it takes, the employee will almost certainly have to go it alone without much help from the company. In addition, communication skills and interpersonal skills are real barriers to advancement that should not be overlooked.

The essence of this research has been to show the structure of business and its lack of diversity as one barrier to advancement for women and other minorities, particularly immigrant Asians in the U.S. On the other hand, personal characteristics also create barriers to advancement, particularly in the areas of verbal and non-verbal communication and how they impact interpersonal skills. At this time, research is needed as to how effective a change in communicative behavior would be in breaking the glass ceiling. In any case, it is my belief that the glass ceiling extends not only to the workplace but to the classroom as well. Not just supervisors, but professors too, desire a focus on listening and speaking skills (giving presentations, think-on-your-feet skills, brainstorming, sharing information, working in groups, trouble-shooting with clients and others). In dozens of interviews I have conducted over the phone and by email with MBA professors at several schools in the U.S., I have learned that

professors especially value think-on-your-feet skills. Raising awareness on the glass ceiling and making modifications in communicative behavior can impact the international MBA student experience.

The implications for the business ESL classroom include the following:

- Make students aware of the glass ceiling and its counterparts.
- Use video clips and plan activities that mimic work and classroom reality.
- Allow students to select video clips and analyze the communicative behavior for the class.
- Videotape students in similar role play situations that are found in video clips. Ask other students to analyze the performance. Change the settings and locations as well as the participants.
- Use videos from popular movies to analyze communication style. Some videos to select include: *The Associate*, *Baby Boom*, *Gung Ho*, *Nine-to-Five*, *Wall Street*, *Working Girl*.

In the next section, I review a Speaking Guide and present some tips for using speech gambits with students like Chen.

The Speaking Guide and Speech Gambits

While it is all well and good to make recommendations, it is more useful to have a guide from which to base instruction for students like Chen. Very advanced business ESL classes have few materials from which to draw; therefore, to have a basis from which to guide spoken instruction I use criteria modified from ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) since their materials are thorough and theoretically sound. Based on the rating scale provided by ACTFL, I use the following modified indicators:

Rating Scale	
Superior	Native-like
Advanced	Working Professional
Intermediate	Limited Working Proficiency
Novice	No Practical Proficiency (Survival)

Each level corresponds to a context for speaking, the content the student should speak on, accuracy requirements, and the text type expected. For example, the Superior speaker can discuss abstract topics, support opinions and hypothesize for most formal and informal settings. This speaker can speak on a wide range of concrete and abstract topics. His greatest fluency comes from speaking on topics of general interest and his own specialty. His errors almost never interfere with communication or disturb the native speaker. He is able to carry on a conversation with extended discourse.

On the other hand the Advanced speaker can describe and narrate on most informal settings and in some formal settings. Mostly, this speaker speaks on concrete topics, and factual topics of personal general interest. He can be understood without difficulty by speakers unaccustomed to dealing with non-native speakers. This speaker can speak in full paragraphs.

The Intermediate speaker can maintain simple face-to-face conversations by asking and responding to simple questions in some informal settings and a limited number of situations. The topics are mostly related to self and he can be understood, with some repetition, by speakers accustomed to dealing with non-native speakers. His discourse style is mostly discrete sentences.

Finally, the Novice speaker can communicate only minimally with formulaic and rote utterances and lists in highly predictable common settings on common aspects of daily life. He is often difficult to understand and usually only speaks in individual words and phrases. Of course,

there is great variation within each level, but the purpose for using such a scale is to plan appropriate speaking activities for the students.

The instructor also needs criteria for assessing the students' spoken language, for which ACTFL readily provides guidelines. With regard to fluency, the instructor needs to note the rate of speech and the use of cohesive devices which bind the discourse together. Grammatical accuracy is another indicator of a student's level, as is pragmatic competence, or the ability to use various discourse management devices to get the message across and to compensate for an imperfect control of the language. The instructor should assess pronunciation as well as sociolinguistic competence, which is the ability to use language appropriately in different registers in various situations within a particular culture, and to use cultural references and idioms. Finally, the instructor needs to take note of the student's vocabulary and the size of his lexicon and adherence to norms of usage.

On the one hand, students need to see appropriate speech modeled. But they also need interactive lessons whereby they can practice appropriate language behavior. By examining video clips of native speech, and by practicing their own speech and videotaping it, students can approximate more native-like norms of verbal and non-verbal communicative styles, if they so desire. But what should they practice? I suggest that instructors prepare speech gambits, whereby the student is able to practice various skills. In fact, several situations will require students to speak out in front of others, both at work and in the classroom. These include: 1) oral presentations, 2) class discussions, and 3) group and pair work. For these situations, students need think-on-your-feet skills and methods for stalling. Specifically, they will need to be able to do the following:

- Get and hold the floor
- Make a clear explanation
- Present and press an argument
- Interrupt
- Follow-up on others' points of view
- Clarify and ask for clarification
- Ask questions and answer questions
- Support a position
- Pose a hypothetical situation
- Express agreement and express disagreement
- Stall for time

This list comes from my research with professors at a variety of business schools. Although they require excellent written skills, they seem more concerned with spoken language in the given cultural environment of the U.S. classroom.

Tips for Speech Gambits

Students should be asked to respond to questions the instructor prepares in advance, answering in a short, cohesive paragraph. Students should begin by working in pairs for practice. Eventually, the entire class should work together to answer the question, clarify for each other, and express opinions on the topic. At the conclusion of each response the instructor needs to give feedback on all aspects of the response (content, form, pronunciation, body language, etc.). Students can repeat their responses. Responses should be videotaped periodically. Students should only be given the questions orally. The best results come when students are given a format

to answer questions allowing for stalling and development of the answer. The sequence includes:

1. Students rephrase the question while becoming aware of the type of question being asked so they can give an appropriate response. (Questions asked may require a list, a definition, or an opinion.)
2. Students tell how they are going to answer the question. Students need to learn how to analyze and strategize their own responses before they give the answer. Also, they need to learn stalling techniques.
3. They should give a topic sentence or the main point of the answer. Students may be used to giving the reasons or details first and the main point at the end.
4. They should elaborate or give an example or definition. If they are answering from a book, they may give a page number. It should be very clear when students are giving information that the author cites, or their own opinion.
5. Students should conclude the response without saying "That's all" but let others know that they are finished speaking.

For the guidelines above, some sample question patterns follow, using the guidelines in the previous paragraphs. It is important for the instructor to ask appropriate level questions and expect an appropriate level response. For example, if the topic is WORK, the following questions might be appropriate for each level speaker.

Novice: Do you have a job?

Intermediate: Tell me what you do at your job.

Advanced: Can you compare your current job with your previous one for me?

Superior: Nowadays, some people are leaving their jobs after many years and moving to the

country to start a new home-based business or to telecommute; what do you think of that?

In the Superior level question, students who are truly at that level, will be able to discuss their opinions on the topic, keeping to the abstract nature of the question, without talking about themselves in the concrete.

Other types of questions for instructors to ask include summarizing using the past tense:

- Can someone summarize a bad day at work? What happened?
- What happened in the scene we saw yesterday?

Ask hypothetical questions:

- If you saw your colleague steal something at work, what would you do?
- If you could change something at your work place, what would you do?
- If you like to make decisions quickly and your colleague takes her time, how would you plan to work together most effectively?
- If you had to give a training session at your workplace and everyone had different learning styles, how would you organize the training?

Ask supported opinion questions:

- Is it fair for job promotions to be based on seniority?
- Is the GMAT and TOEFL a fair assessment of a student's abilities? How do you think a student's abilities should be assessed for entry into a graduate program?

In this section we examined concrete ways to introduce communication patterns to business ESL students using a rating guide and speech gambits. I suggested students view video clips and videotape themselves. The next section deals with some video clips and ideas for

incorporating them into the business ESL classroom.

Using Video to Introduce the Glass Ceiling in Business ESL

Although an entire video is fun to watch, and students might like the break, I suggest using a clip of about 5 minutes or so to illustrate the communicative behaviors discussed in the section on the glass ceiling. There are several advantages to using popular movies which includes the following:

- There are a variety of ways to use the same video.
- They are interesting and fun for students and add variety and interest to lessons.
- They can illustrate various types of speech gambits.
- They help students to monitor spoken behavior.
- Several resources exist to assist teachers in planning lessons.
- Video clips don't take long.
- Directors have already selected appropriate language for a given situation. Characters are close to the norm or stereotypical. The class is ready to analyze the language.
- Comedy (as in TV sitcoms) marks inappropriate language and behavior through laughter.

In the section about the glass ceiling, I mentioned a few videos which illustrate communication style in business settings. With each of the following video example, I include lesson ideas for raising students' awareness of the glass ceiling, and for noticing the use of speech gambits.

Gung Ho

Gung Ho depicts the differences between Japanese and American culture. The film deals

with Japanese auto workers who assist a failing US firm. The communication style of the Japanese board members serves as an example of so-called women's non-verbal communicative pattern in American culture. A close inspection of the communication style between the American liaison and the Japanese reveals vastly different ways of communicating information (Howard, 1986).

Before viewing ask the students if they have ever had to represent their company at a meeting, and what kinds of things they would do to prepare. Ask, when giving a presentation, what are some tactics you might use to help keep people interested? Next, watch the section of the video where the American auto worker goes to Japan to ask the Japanese company for help. Examine the verbal and non-verbal behavior of the American and the Japanese. After the clip, ask the following questions, 1) How would you describe the American's style of communication? 2) What kind of non-verbal language did the American use? 3) How would you compare the Japanese board members with the American regarding communication style? For effectively examining the non-verbal behaviors, show the video clip with the sound off. Allow any Japanese students to discuss business practices in their country or experience. Role play an international meeting like the one in the video clip.

Nine-to-Five

A popular comedy, *Nine to Five* parodies the lives of three secretaries as they try to turn the tables on their "sexist, egotistical, lying, hypocritical, bigot boss. Not only does one of the women have seniority over the boss, now a vice-president, but she trained him for the position as well. As a token of appreciation, Mr. Hart, the boss, gives one of the secretaries a gift and sexually harasses her in his office, saying she is more than just a

'dumb secretary' to him. To another he refuses a promotion saying that clients would rather deal with a man when it comes to figures. In addition, he is against the policy of hiring Hispanics, African Americans, and the disabled for office positions, preferring instead to hire a drunk. Meanwhile, his wife is on an Italian cruise ship which he refused to go on because he was not going to go on any 'dago ship' (Gilbert, 1990).

Before viewing, ask if the students notice any differences between the ways in which men and women talk. Ask what they know about office lingo. View the clip where Violet takes the new employee to visit Mr. Hart. Military lingo, sexual allusion, and sports lingo are all in the first part of the video. After viewing the meeting, ask the following questions, 1) How does Mr. Hart refer to his secretaries? 2) How would you describe the corporate lingo? Ask students to role play this situation. Next, change Mr. Hart to Mrs. Hart. Discuss sexual harassment.

The Associate

Whoopi Goldberg handles business her own way in this outrageous comedy hit! Whoopi plays a fast-track executive who starts her own company after a backstabbing co-worker nabs her promotion. But when she's locked out of the stuffy corporate world, she invents a dazzling male business partner to sell her ideas! Her wacky plan soon spins wildly out of control, however, when her bogus "associate" becomes Wall Street's hottest financial whiz–and Whoopi herself must impersonate him! The Associate is a comedy treat you're sure to love! (Petrie)

Before viewing ask if the students can tell when people are not telling the truth. Ask the class if they have ever tried to tried to get their way through manipulation and tell about that situation. Show the clip where Laurel Ayers is sitting around the table with a lot of businessmen. They

won't look at her work, so she begins to cry. After viewing, ask 1) Why does Laurel cry at the meeting and what effect does it have? 2) What are the reactions to Laurel's outburst? Ask students to role play this scene but Laurel doesn't cry. What happens? Discuss manipulation and different ways people try to get their way.

Baby Boom

> J.C. Wiatt (Diane Keaton) is a high-powered career woman who inherits a baby — and discovers a side of herself she never knew she had — in this comedy about the pitfalls and payoffs of instant parenthood. J.C. thinks she has it all together. Beautiful and talented, she's on the road to certain success. So when an adorable baby girl comes into her life by way of a distant cousin's will, it's J.C. who breaks out in a rash, declaring 'I can't have a baby. I have a 12:30 lunch meeting!' Juggling power lunches and powdered formula, J.C. is soon forced out of the fast track by a conniving colleague and a bigoted boss. But this lady won't stay down for long. She'll prove to the world that a woman can have it all — and on her own terms too (Shyer, 1996).

J.C. Wiatt is hard-working and she doesn't have children, but when a child comes into her life, things change at work. J.C. leaves the company in New York City and heads for a tranquil life in Vermont. When her farmhouse becomes a financial burden, J.C. founds Country Baby, a gourmet baby food company which becomes a great success. Country Baby attracts the attention of her former company in New York City who wants to buy it. Before viewing, ask, what kinds of job do women commonly do in your country? And, what does it take to succeed in business? The instructor will want to show several clips throughout this video. Show a clip near the beginning of the film where J.C.'s boss wants to offer her a partnership. They are in a restaurant. Also,

show a clip near the end of the film where J.C. meets with her former employers in a large conference room. Ask the following questions: 1) What does J.C.'s boss mean when he says that he doesn't think of her as a woman? 2) According to J.C.'s boss, what does it take to succeed in business? 3) How did J.C.'s boss successful remove her from the company without firing her? 4) What kind of verbal communicative style does J.C. use? Ask the students: should women (and men) have to make sacrifices to be successful? If so, what should they entail? What kinds of sacrifices are you willing to make to be successful in business? Is being successful in business being successful in life?

Working Girl

> Beauty. Brains. Charm. Tess McGill (Melanie Griffith) has them all. In fact, she's got everything going for her except the right haircut, the right clothes, and most importantly, the right job. Ambushed one too many times in her struggle to get out of the Wall Street secretarial pool and onto a management track, Tell decides to take matters into her own hands. When her classy, seductive and treacherous boss (Sigourney Weaver) breaks a leg skiing, Tess steps, literally into her boss's shoes–as well as her apartment, her corner office and her $6,000 dresses. Suitably disguised, Tess forms an alliance with a very capable–and very attractive–Wall Street investment banker (Harrison Ford). Together, they create a deal that could catapult Tess into the big time–or finish her off for good (Greenhut & Mark, 1988).

Before viewing, ask, how do you know if someone is telling the truth? What does dress communicate about you? Show the clip where Tess meets Katherine for the first time. They go into Katherine's office and discuss office decorum. Ask students to describe the differences

between the two women. Ask, what seem to be some of Tess's "barriers" to success? Using various magazines, discuss images in men's and women's business fashions. Discuss casual Friday, visiting clients, business lunch or dinner, etc.

Tips for Using Video

To use video clips successfully takes some preparation. Use the following guidelines to prepare the video lessons.

- Use video clips, rather than the entire film.
- Choose short clips so you can see them several times.
- Put the video on reserve for students to see the entire video if they want to.
- Always prepare a handout so students can focus and get the most out of the lesson.
- Handouts should include background information about the video since you probably won't be seeing the whole thing.
- Include focus questions on the handout. Charts to fill in are also very useful. Also, write out all your questions in advance so you can repeat yourself exactly when practicing speech gambits with the students.
- You can make your own videos but it is time-consuming and expensive.
- Commercially prepared videos, videodiscs, and DVD for ESL are not very interesting, do not always use authentic language, and are limited in their use.
- Prepare lessons that take off from the video clips you use. In other words, combine them with other activities such as negotiations students will do in class, conflict management techniques, or student presentations.
- Combine the use of video with the collection of live data at a worksite or in town.

- Allow international students to relate business practices in their countries with what they observe in the films.

Conclusion

At the beginning of the paper, I introduced you to Chen. While Chen's English skills will not be perfect by the time he arrives at his MBA program, most likely he will be much more aware, and able to deal with his communication behavior for the situations for which he will find himself. By having knowledge of the glass ceiling and examining how communicative styles can be a barrier to advancement as evidenced in popular movies, Chen will be able to practice, and videotape his own interactions. He will be able to listen effectively to classroom discourse, participate appropriately in discussions, stall, hold the floor, and be understood.

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